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Christian Teaching:
AN INQUIRY

BY

Burdette K. Marvin

Introduction by
JOSEPH A. WILLIAMS, *Ph. D.*

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CHRISTIAN TEACHING:

AN INQUIRY

From

J. A. Williams

To Dr. Floyd H. Ross

An Eminent Scholar
A Scintillating Speaker
An Authority in
Comparative Religion
and Friend.
With admiration
and appreciation.

Dedicated to the minds
and spirits of my
grandchildren

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Burdette K. Marvin has rendered a service to humanity in writing this little book. I know the heart of the man, and that the urge to write the book stems from the burning desire to help people free themselves from the irrationality of much of their religious teaching. Indeed, it should be illuminating to the reader to know that the book is the result of the life-long struggle of the author to free himself from the irrational aspects of the Christian teaching with which he was indoctrinated in childhood and in youth, which was no doubt typical of the religious doctrine taught in orthodox Christian churches. Coupled with the desire to clarify his own religious thinking then was the corresponding yearning to promote a rational type of religious thinking because of his sympathy for young people upon whom such an injustice is perpetrated.

The reader cannot fail to be impressed by the author's critical treatment of Christian teaching, which he has presented in great profuseness; all of which argues that this type of religious instruction is not only unsound but totally unfit for this enlightened age, and should have been left behind with the bygone medieval age where much of it was abnormally developed and promulgated. However, it is hoped that the reader will not become lost in the plethora of critical material, but will see that the author has pointed out, also, some of the essential elements of a true religion, which is spiritual in nature, permanent in character, and free from an entangling alliance with physical world patterns which must change with new discoveries and the growth of science. This the author does in various concluding arguments which are supported by appropriately chosen Biblical quotations.

A perusal of the book is sure to raise in the minds of thoughtful persons many vital problems of major importance, about which volumes could well be written in explanation.

It is not now necessary for us to engage in fanciful speculation about the nature of the world, the universe and man because scientific method has enabled us to accumulate a body of tested knowledge in all fields of thought on which to base a realistic philosophy. We now know that the universe, the world and everything within it and upon it, plant and animal life, including man, constitute a great system which is related and interrelated in all its parts by cause and effect, which we call natural law. It is man's ability to think, reason, and analyze the world and himself which enables him to discover cause and effect in everything, and which makes this a rational world instead of a chaotic world operated by caprice. Everything is in a cause and effect series of relationships. Nothing exists in isolation or outside the system. So everything has a past which may be called its history; and the same is true of religion. Just so Christian teaching must be seen as a part of the development of one form of religion in comparatively recent times.

The matrix of all varieties of religion doubtless exists in the dim, distant past. Indeed, the development of religion may truly be regarded as coincident with the rise and development of human life, which may be traced back ten thousand years through our immediate ancestors to the first modern man, who appeared on the scene some twenty-five thousand years ago; and his ancestors may be traced with less clearness several hundred thousand years with authoritative estimates ranging from half a million to fifty million years. Religion is readily traceable in recent civil-

ization to thirty-five hundred years before Jesus was born; and there is good reason to believe that it existed in previous civilizations for at least ten or fifteen thousand years; and probably hundreds of thousands of years before that. Moreover, religion was authoritatively regarded as an instinct in man's original nature until a few decades ago, when research showed it to be a developed thing; but still one of the earliest interests in man's mental development.

The author has properly directed the reader's attention to the age of man and the world. With such a background in mind, is he not right in indicating that it is the acme of absurdity to teach that Jesus originated religion, or that religion before his time was all wrong, or that present day religion other than Christian is all wrong? Yet such was virtually if not factually the import of Christian teaching in many places.

Many definitions of religion have been formed by scholarly men. One good definition says that religion is essentially man's attitude toward totality; it is what man thinks of man, of life in all its multifarious forms, of the world and of the vast universe. Consciously, although not always rationally, man forms ideas little or big in terms of his knowledge background; and these are suffused with feelings and emotions, sometimes with awe, at the bigness of the world and the universe. This experience crystallizes into belief and faith-states with corresponding sentiments and attitudes. Thus arises the religious consciousness, and this constitutes the core of religion. It is a composite of mental life, and may rightly be considered spiritual experience. Religious consciousness expresses itself in many ways according to the individual's personality; and every personality is unique; no two persons are exactly alike. Yet all human beings are essentially alike. Each person is a

combination of human traits, a different pattern, though the differences be ever so small. All human beings are composed of inherited traits or original nature plus all of their learning. These traits have all been differentiated and analyzed by psychologists. Without giving a complete list of man's traits here, and analysis of each one, we may say that man inherits a unique body structure, a number of drives which serve to preserve and to propagate life, and a temperament which determines the pattern of emotions. His learning eventuates in knowledge, habits, sentiments and attitudes.

Religious consciousness is no different in nature from any other conscious process. It possesses no mystical or supernatural elements or traits. It can be analyzed in exactly the same way as any other conscious state. Analysis of religion gives us a realistic truth, just as analysis of rocks, plants, our bodies and anything else gives us truth; and truth does not contradict itself. Religion is none-theless a spiritual reality. Truth is arrived at only by tested observations and facts, which are in turn combined and organized to make up principles and laws; and this constitutes knowledge. This is the only way we can get knowledge in all fields of learning including religion.

The old theory that you are born with knowledge, or that you can get it intuitively, was exploded a few centuries ago; but this theory still persists, and is made by many religious bodies the basis of their religious beliefs and faith. This, of course, accounts for the existence of so much irrational religious doctrine.

Science is the name given to tested and verified knowledge in all realms of reality, material and immaterial, physical and spiritual; and since religion is a natural experience it can be analyzed the same as any other experi-

ence; and there can be no conflict between religion and science, as has been asserted by many people for centuries. However, the theories about religion which constitute the doctrines and dogmas of most orthodox churches, and which is called theology, has been in constant conflict with science.

The conflict between theology and science has been a matter of major concern from the Greeks down to the present time. The great seer-philosopher, Socrates, was condemned to death for refusing to accept the traditional belief in a hierarchy of gods; and for teaching that there was only one great power which operated by natural laws. Galileo, another great scientist, was forced, on the threat of excommunication from the church, to deny that the earth moves around the sun; and case after case of persecution of scientists by the church through the centuries down to the Scopes case in Tennessee, two decades ago, illustrate the persistent conflict between theology and science.

The crux of this great controversy may be summed up thus: Modern philosophy is based primarily upon tested knowledge; and it relies chiefly upon science and the scientific method for its data and results, or findings, in all fields of thought and research. On such a basis it attempts to synthesize all this material into a coherent, integrated whole, consistent in all its parts. It cannot be absolute truth. No knowledge can be absolute truth. It can give us pragmatic truth, which is the nearest men can come to absolute truth. Theology and the old absolutistic type of philosophy have relied largely upon intuition, revelation, inspiration, aspiration and speculation. It claims a supernatural knowledge, not learned but directly given by God; and from this all so-called laws are deduced. The two

philosophies are diametrically opposed to each other. The first assumes as little as possible, the second assumes everything. What the former would attempt to prove, the latter would accept unproved. The former, known as empirical philosophy, relies chiefly upon reason; theology upon imagination and emotion. One paints a realistic picture; the other a fantastic one.

As civilization has advanced through the accumulation and spread of knowledge and education, people give less and less credence to speculative theories, and more and more credence to empirical knowledge, as a guide to life. Hence the decline of absolutistic philosophy and theology and religion, also. Figuratively speaking, it is too bad in the threshing process to lose good grain with the chaff and straw; but some loss is unavoidable. Just so with religion and old theological frames of reference. Old theories of religion formed from fancy and wishful thinking on slender and inadequate factual bases must be discarded, and a modern interpretation and expression of religion in harmony with the wealth of knowledge now in existence must take its place. The great problem of all churches of the world, including Christian in all its subdivisions, is to bring its theory and practice into step with advancing knowledge. Old expressions lose their meaning, and fail to minister to men's spiritual needs. Fortunately, this problem is being solved in some quarters, but progress in this matter is relatively very slow.

There are several reasons for this tardiness: The most important reason is, that the old Christian theology became intrenched and elaborately institutionalized in the medieval age, when the church assumed leadership over all other institutions. By authoritarian methods it has retained its hold upon masses of the people. Although the

Reformation brought repudiation of some practices of the Catholic Church, and modification of some theories, yet Protestants retained the essential features of the old theology, and continued to rely upon absolutistic philosophy and authoritarianism in so-called orthodox churches. Only a few liberal churches have had the temerity to assert their freedom from external religious authority and to follow an internal authority, based upon reason, the established findings of science, ethics and empirical philosophy. However, it is unquestionably true that many people, with and without membership in orthodox Christian churches, Catholic and Protestant, and in other churches and religious organizations over the world, accept privately a modern liberal interpretation of religion. Another reason for the tardiness, is that the strong claims of the authoritarian churches, in terms of materialistic reward and punishment, appeal to the mass of the people who lack the ability to think things through for themselves, or prefer to go along with the crowd as the easy way.

Until the resistance of indoctrination of old theologies, ignorance and the backward pull of the mores are greatly reduced, we shall continue to find much irrational Christian teaching. But it is heartening to know that theological schools are becoming more progressive, that old doctrines and disciplines are slowly losing their grip, with the advance of science and the spread of tested knowledge; that persecutions on the ground of unsoundness of doctrine are fewer; that people are becoming increasingly more tolerant; so that a wider acceptance of a rational empirical type of theology may be regarded as within the range of future hopeful expectations.

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November 16th, 1948

I

A reprint from the ANNALS OF 1921 of the South Dakota Academy of Science entitled "The Present State of Religious Belief in South Dakota," by Doane Robinson, which I have lately read, stirs me to various reflections. And first I think: How little open progress of rationality in the teaching of religion in the past quarter-century! As a minister agreed with me recently, "We are still in the Dark Ages." He might have said "have returned to the Dark Ages," since rationality was in the ascendant two centuries ago. Out of that revolt against priestcraft should have come a wholesome religion of spirituality consistent with our rapidly increasing understanding of "God's Footstool." But popular thought moves by action and reaction, pendulum-wise, as often as by the laws of the growth of living things.

The survey posed these five questions:

1. *Do You Believe Your Consciousness and Personal Identity Will Survive Death?*

2. *Do You Believe There Is a Personal God?* (This may mean a God who is a person or, a God of persons, concerned with persons.[1])

3. *Do You Believe Jesus of Nazareth Was the Immaculately Conceived Son of God?*[2]

4. *Do You Believe the Bible Is the Inspired Word of God, Unique in Literature and Infallible in Statement?*

5. *Do You Believe God Definitely Alters His Course to Answer the Prayers of Men?*

Those questions upon the fundamentals of the Christian religion as generally taught would have, I judge, approximately the same replies today, largely because educated people prefer to let sleeping dogs lie. On the one hand,

they are disinclined to probe their beliefs; and, on the other, they shrink from the denunciation and violence of the *ignoscenti*. Herd instinct seems to be compelling, as when "the whole city" (Ephesus) was in an uproar.

I divide Christian teaching, the ordinary kind which you get in most churches and over the radio, into three parts:

1. adoration of spirituality and the highest ethic as exemplified by Jesus.

2. ascription to God of the Bible and of all logical deductions therefrom, regardless of their cruelty or absurdity.

3. assumption that Christianity is the source of all good in the world, and ignoring the fact that Christians are in a one-third minority among the religions of the world. The common mind, scorning distinctions, holds any fault found in part two or part three to be assault upon part one.

Of late years I have felt deep concern over the influence of religious dogmatism upon our thinking in the fields of government, finance, and economics, to mention a few. In the words of George Henry Soule, regarding the Puritan revolution: "The conflict of religious ideas was, indeed, important; but it was important not so much because of the abstract significance of these ideas, as because they represented the mechanism of attack and defence between economic and social classes who were struggling for power." (There is a very interesting discussion of this theme in the time of Jezebel in Harry Emerson Fosdick's A GUIDE TO THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE BIBLE, pp. 20-21.) Consider the Townsend Plan. *Conclusion*: An ideology is elevated to the rank of a religion, whereupon it becomes sacrosanct. Consider Stalinism evolving out of com-

munism, Hitlerism out of Nazism; even Rooseveltism out of the New Deal. Five years ago these were discussed as the possible beginnings of new religions. Woe to him who invoked reasoning against them. In the language of Christian and Moslem, he was an "unbeliever." An object of scorn, he was thought to merit punishment. Christians find unconfessed satisfaction of their yearning to punish and, deeper, of their sadism, in the frequent declarations in their scriptures that God will punish. "There shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." Christians seem never to discover the flat contradiction between such sentiments and their claims to be the children of a God of love. But people who prefer a dictum to a demonstration should expect to be self-contradicted.

The five questions quoted I consider no credit to serious, reflective people. Christians love to repeat the words of Jesus: "God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." Then they demand belief in purely material manifestations. The questions three and five have to do with matter. Almost all of our people think of God in connection with their material interests, the safety of self or others, health ditto, wealth ditto, descending, for millions of little people, even to a shower on a new hat! They carry this to the astounding length of a famous aviator proclaiming his rescue at sea as conclusive evidence of results of prayer. How any man can forget the millions who have died at sea for all their prayers, and think that God selected him! I call upon the intelligence of any teen-ager who has not been bemused by his religious teachers; and I assure you that quite a few youngsters have not been bemused. Incidentally, man is a land animal.

The Bible many times declares the inevitability of natural law, as Luke XII: 54-5, "And He (Jesus) said also to the people, When ye see a cloud arise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is. And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass." Again, Luke XXI: 29-30, "And He (Jesus) spake to them a parable: Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand." Finally, as to the wicked, "receiving unto themselves the recompense of their folly which was meet." All this is believed by the devout who yet believe that God has, does, and will continue to annul natural law by air, sea, and land for the sake of His own. *Dictum*: The mentality of people may be gauged by the time requisite for them to acknowledge self-evident truth.

Mass acceptance of what we are told has always been the drag upon intellectual advancement. It stems from the ancient practice of the Eastern Hemisphere of regarding as divinely inspired any strange man who comes from the desert with begging bowl in hand and mumbling religious formulas. Their number has been legion, and they continue as of old throughout the desert countries. They make pronouncements to suit the occasion, forgetting previous pronouncements. The rich young man is to sell all and give it to the poor; but the box of ointment broken over his head is not waste; "For ye have the poor always with you." (Luke 26: 7-11); "Love your enemies. Pray for them that despitefully use you." But, as to the Pharisees who sought to kill him, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" Of course, this is just human nature. We excuse it as such,

and do not think the worse of the prophet. *Om Mane Pudme Hum,* and The Wheel, in India; the Senussi, and the Mad Mullah, in Africa. From the Pillars of Hercules to the Japan Sea and to the North Cape this cult of the Holy Hermit. Today we scorn laziness and failure to provide for self and family; but Christians exude retroactive compassion when they read: "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." Christians fail to see their self-contradictions.

Consider this: *Omne bonum de super* versus *Omne vivum ex vivo.* The second statement is the conclusion of science as to all living things beyond the primary and undiscovered stage of life on this earth; while the first is in flat contradiction to the theory of evolution of life forms, including brain development and resulting refinements in thinking on this earth. The evolutionist must see primitive man as near the top of the ladder of life forms, the mind of a Socrates, an Aristotle or an Edison as at the highest rung. For the evolutionist, such minds are *ne plus ultra* as yet. To him the concept of a Supreme Being not evolved is but a picture, as on the silver screen, of Man's highest thought; and no more substantial than the silver screen.

How is it that the alert, educated, modern world, or any part of it, can turn to the vague pronouncements of illiterate desert dwellers, long ago and far away, for their prophets, while today's experts are ignored? Who asks our historians to forecast political developments a millennium away? Christians cite "science" only when they think that science supports their argument; otherwise, as was said to me about the time the reprint was published: "I believe

what God tells me, not what man tells me." Who can find it worth his while to reply to such reasoning?

The Pamphlet shows, not one in six, as stated, but one in seven (50 vs. 300 in total of 350) to answer, "No." Where do they keep themselves, these negators? I know a few here; but they are not vocal. Who wishes to stir the passions of the populace? This timidity is a matter for deep concern. I will have none of it. I consider excommunication, practised by the Catholic Church today, an intellectual monstrosity, a cruel relic of medieval thought, not to be reconciled with the professions of Holy Church. Then I dismiss the whole matter from my mind with the sad reflection: Men still love logic more than mercy.

Standing before St. Patrick's Cathedral one day, I read the Pope's announcement of remission of certain days in purgatory for those Catholics who should attend certain services. Looking up at the beautiful cathedral, I thought: Columbia College is trying to teach me about my world, but what of this encyclical? I regard with disgust all continuance of Middle-Ages religiosity in an age of progressive knowledge. The empires of China, Persia, Babylon, the Seljuks, Egypt, Greece, Rome, Mecca had their scientists, philosophers, poets, architects, and designers of high order; but to the unlettered even if devout Christian, they are merely "pagans," the result of Christian teaching. Compare the Sermon on the Mount with Hebrew law 200 B. C. To imagine a high degree of civilization without a fine ethic! Yet presumptuous Paul, standing before the altar to the unknown God, said to the men of Athens: "Whom, therefore, ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." Do you, Reader, find anything in the Greek philosophers to match the silliness of some of the things

ascribed to Paul: How should a woman wear her hair; women not to speak in public; his bestial discussion of marriage; his "last trump" oratory? Whether Christian or Hottentot, no man should call holy, making no distinction, that which is known to be permeated with cruelty, bestiality, falsity, and triviality. Shouts of denial will not change the record. Who does not admire the beauties of the Bible? "Let the wicked forsake his way." "What have I required of thee but to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God?" Is it not pagan and primitive to call indecencies "holy" just because gross men retained them in that Book? As to pagan lore, the mass of Christians show the same spirit as shown by the Moslems from the Alexandrian Library to the "Mad Mullah": If it is in the Qur'an, it is not needed. Destroy it! If it is not in the Qur'an, it is false. Destroy it!" Why this suppression by Christians if they love the truth? The Greeks of Homer's time[3] believed in divine calming of the sea; but how many Christian preachers and teachers tell that to their people while reading of Jesus' calming the sea? Bemused, that's what they are; and tricked by their bemusement into misrepresentation.

In Genesis we are told to "increase and multiply" (recall St. Paul on marriage), a natural law put in the form of a divine edict. (It has long been noted that "natural laws" are commanded by God, also many national customs. The simple devout say: "For He knoweth our frame. He remembereth that we are dust." Of course, the divine command is merely *post hoc*. Anyway, the subject is in the realm of the physical, again, and out of the realm of the spiritual.) Genesis also tells us that God gave Adam dominion over the beasts and other living things. The scientists of New York's American Museum of Natural History

subscribe to the theory of man's life on earth as of the order of sixty million years; and it is only in the last few centuries—a few centuries against the backdrop of sixty million years—that firearms have enabled "Adam" to exercise his "dominion," and that only in the civilized areas of the earth. In all backward areas the beasts still exercise considerable dominion over man. When a Russian, a Finn, or other northern couple pitched their baby from a sledge to a wolfpack, God's gift of dominion was seen to be only theoretical. Yet was it the logical thing for the couple to do. And so, around the earth: snakes and tigers in India, THE LIONS OF TSAGO IN EAST AFRICA. And what of insects and bacteria? "Unfair," cries the Christian, "we never thought of such things." Exactly! The usual Christian teacher "never thought of such things." But well-read persons know something about such things; and a well-read Christian should check the inherited religion with the knowledge[4] of the day, and not repeat the errors of our uninformed forefathers. I hold that to be indecent. Not thus have we achieved our present state of enlightenment. Incidentally, the preachers deplore empty pews, yet continue to affront the intelligence of their congregations. (Lord Bryce, MODERN DEMOCRACIES, II, 326: "Men of the educated class have practically dropped Christianity" in Argentina and Brazil.) But, again, this is a discussion not of spirit but of matter, and undertaken only to oppose Christian persistence in their religious teaching in confusing matter and spirit, using the words in their generally accepted meanings. But their Leader said: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." What ails his professing followers? Over the radio as I write: "When sin came into the world six

thousand years ago!" Archbishop Usher's gratuitous absurdity of three centuries ago deforms our thinking still. O tempora, O mores! Yet just such preachers habitually prate about "in the beginning," eternity, forever and ever, world without end, and such incomprehensible periods of time. But, "The earth was created 4004 B. C.," says THE WORLD'S BIRTHDAY, Professor Gaussen, 1860, p. 13.

It is conceded that religions degenerate from the spirituality of the founder to the gross mentality of the multitude. Jesus addressed himself to the dullest minds about him, "His sheep," the woolly-headed ones. The parables were of the common ways of a pastoral and agricultural people. His meanings he had to explain, even to his disciples. Outside the sacred Book,[5] they would be seen for what they are: elementary lessons in the first principles of conduct. As such we need them in our Sunday Schools. Educated people do not go to Sunday School to learn ethics. Moreover, these lessons are not unique. Compare Zephaniah, "But the unjust knoweth no shame," with Plautus, "I count him lost who is lost to shame." But we have made these parables ours, and we are fond of them. Very good. We still have a lot of mutton-heads among us. Only, we should not go so far as to falsify the record.

Strange how, when in religious mood, Christians seem to delight in a woefully low level of intellectuality; yet do we cheerfully spend billions upon education, and take pride in our outstanding men, even in our smart boys and girls. Conversely, the sure passport to popular favor is praise of the common man. H. G. Wells paid his tribute to that quality of our mass mind, and so did Lincoln. Well, the first thing is to believe in yourself. Incidentally, how else could a desert teacher win a following? Herd instinct

and intellectuality are mutually exclusive: the more of the one, the less of the other, as we see often. Who go to revivals? Very good. But the high priests of religion should be educated and truthful. What efforts do the most of them make to elevate the worshiper's thought of God as more than a handyman? "Take it to the Lord in prayer." "For He knoweth that ye have need of these things." In a word, "Be helpless. Let George (God) do it." There is a great deal of that reliance on someone else, rather than self-reliance, in Christian teaching.

OF IMMORTALITY

Man's spiritual upward reachings may be compared to those frustrations which we see in Nature: birds forever trying to free themselves from lice; cattle forever trying to free themselves from flies; the grazers forever trying to escape the carnivores; the major frustration of reproduction. However futile, these constant efforts to attain perfection are invaluable as maintaining a tolerable living. So, no perpetual life, no perpetual peace, no perpetual happiness, no freedom from sin, no perpetual love, nothing perpetual; but efforts to reach it making life highly worthwhile. The unfinished Tower of Babel is a symbol of earth's unrealizable dreams. But religious teachers habitually present the *post hoc propter hoc* fallacy, saying, "Because man has dreamed, therefore, it must be true." (Primary error in logic, the non sequitur.) Any student of folk lore will see the "consanguinity" of Christian dreams with our fairy tales—Sleeping Beauty, Cinderella, all the combinations of high position (Christians sing of reigning on thrones), wealth (streets of gold), happiness ever after. Poor little people, solacing themselves for their hard lives

by weaving about themselves a cocoon of dream stuff!

We see, also, the "consanguinity" of demonology with the "hierarchy of heaven" which was accepted by the Jews after the Babylonian captivity and greatly expanded by the Christians, especially the Catholics. On the one hand, ghosts, afrits, witches, jinns, goblins, gremlins (recent, jocular), and many more, in every tongue; and on the other hand, Milton's Heavenly Powers, and the lengthening list of Catholic saints. Today, and here, it is not popular to express belief in demonology; but as to its opposite number, only the rationalist will object. To him all this world of spirits will appear as merely an exercise of man's distinctive power: imagination. Such concept Christians earnestly oppose. I conclude that the psychological basis of their opposition is the instinct for self-preservation, commonly called Nature's First Law.

OF LAW

Christian teachings declare that every law which man discovers in the world about us, whether dynamic, chemical, or electric; whether optical or tactile; whether physical or mental; was devised—planned—by God prior to man's existence (60 million years?), and all the laws which man may yet discover; and to the nth degree in number. As if one said: "I see a thousand pictures on that white wall before us"; and you replied, "I see none." One says: "The pictures are there. All you do is mark off the unneeded space, and your enclosed figure is the picture. The artists, the discoverers see only what was put there by God in the beginning." Ah, so! But what of the laws of behavior? Do they antedate the living, behaving forms? Or Mendel's Law of Inheritance? Or Gresham's Law of Money?

Twaddle! No. Law is of man's devising, to explain behavior. Take the laws of ballistics, for example. They are laws of man's devising. The course of a bullet is the result of pressures: powder, gravity, air resistance, and others. With the same bullet and the like pressures, how could there be a deviation in course? The bullet follows no law, for there was none until man devised it. Science is very busy formulating laws for newly discovered behaviors. It would be sheer fantasy, precluded by the Law of Poverty, to say that there were laws prior to behaviors, and prior to man's law-devising brain. Anyway, the bullet does not act because of law. It reacts to pressures. There were reactions, but not laws.

CONCLUSION

In 1928 I stood at the entrance to a small courtyard in Tolga, a small Arab town near Biskra, a tourist city in Southern Algeria, North Africa. There, with an 18-year-old son, I saw a holy man in a small cave in the opposite rock wall. The cave was barred. In the courtyard sat a few men listening to the mumbling in the cave. Being a "Christian dog," I would not venture nearer. The various denominations of our religion are a great advance over that, especially in good works; but they still have their "holy men" mumbling in caves.

II

In the first section I brought out the preponderance of the physical in Christian teaching of religion, a spiritual matter, for all the epexegesis of the learned divines throughout the Christian era. I consider that, as a result of two thousand years of the teaching that the Great Spirit

is constantly watching and directing the physical world, sickness of body rather than sickness of soul will always in daily life be of primary interest, and thought worthy to be called to God's attention. You might as well call black white, and be done with it. This false teaching will persist. However, rare spirits will lay emphasis upon the spiritual which, after all, is the raison d'être for Christianity. Recall my points 1, 2, and 3 in section one.

THE ORDER OF NATURE

Let us look now at the opposition of Christian teaching to the world about us, to the Order of Nature. This opposition is based upon the belief that the teaching is *de super* and, therefore, that anything contrary is negligible. To make this study, we must consider some of the principles of "Nature." Recalling the old debates regarding hen or egg first, we must ask: What is Nature's prior principle, Life, or Protection of Life? With no living form, there is no need to protect life. With no protection, life cannot be. Not to waste time in dialectics, I pass the question and proceed to the known facts of Life and Protection.

I cite two types of protection: 1, of the individual; 2, of the group or race. The great, fierce brutes are individually protected; while sardines, rabbits, and all weak things have only racial protection through enormous reproduction. Thus, both types co-exist for all the destructive powers of the first type, of weather, and of disease. This through recent aeons has been Nature's (and the God of Nature's) law. Now, Christian teaching is set to oppose that law by insistence upon protection of weak individuals. Occasionally some student of men in the mass undertakes

to tell us that we cannot oppose Nature and get away with it. There has been some effect; witness recent shifts from morality to physiology and psychology; from moral suasion (preaching, reward, punishment) to therapeutics and psychopathy in our treatment of aberrations. If we avoid morbidity, we may yet be willing to terminate hopeless suffering and insanity: conform to Nature's Law of Health.

Christian teaching is set to oppose Nature's Law of Terminus. Just as in the case of Protection, Nature's Terminus is both individual and racial. Christian and many other teachings deny individual terminus. "O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory?" Paul's "last trump" oratory. I cannot discuss this matter. As a series of dramatic pictures, the Book of Revelation is superb; but keen minds distinguish between imagery and fact. This fight against Terminus is absolutely derisible; but it would be useless, unpleasant, and unkind for me to go into details. I only remark in passing that opposition to Terminus (preaching immortality) is like the sun's light upon the earth: Half the earth always lighted, but no spot lighted always. The extreme width of the spotlight of our interest in immortality may be set at three hundred years. Beyond that range, it is an academic subject, our more distant forebears and descendants being without the pale of our interest. Incidentally, it is a fact that not everybody desires immortality. It is the emotional people who enlarge upon it.

Christian teaching has long opposed other Laws of Nature. What are Laws of Nature? They are the regular, expectable ways of the "Circumstance," including heat, chemicals, and so forth, and "X," the Life Force, always seemingly purposeful. Laws of Life: Motion, Reproduc-

tion, Diversification of Form, and all within a cycle comparable to the rain cycle. Typified by the tentacles of a caterpillar, the Life Force reaches out in all directions, proceeding where it can.

THE LAW OF PURPOSE

When completely obstructed, the Life Force fails, Purpose ends. Christians teach that "Nature's God" is omnipotent; that his purposes cannot be defeated. But we see Nature's purposes defeated all over the earth. Perhaps fifty per cent of the buds on the apple tree fail to flower; perhaps fifty per cent of the flowers fail to set; perhaps seventy-five per cent of the sets fail to mature; and perhaps ninety per cent of the seeds in the matured fruits fail to germinate. If so, then 157/160 of the tree's, Nature's, "purpose" and elaborate effort by the machinery of root, bark, sap, and leaf, have been defeated. Among men, only scientists have such patience. (Excuse the suggested personification. There is no patience or purpose, only cause and effect, in Nature, to give the usual scientific conclusion.) The latest discovered colossal defeat is the overwhelming of life in a torrid Antarctica by an ice-cap. But Christian teaching remains: That God's purposes are sure. (No need to remind me of their subterfugeal responses.)

Sub-purpose, or Minor Teleology: We see it in everything alive: The bud, flower, fruit, seed, plant, and bud again, clearly unconsciously teleological (compare a cotton gin). The maternal protective instinct, however, is consciously teleological, but only to the extent of preservation of offspring during infancy. The lioness is fiercely protective of her cubs, but cares nothing for her stools, although both came out of her body at approximately the same

spot, and she saw neither arrive. At the other extreme of concern, fish seem to care little for their discharges. But always, above plant life, there is just enough care, as a turtle or a wasp for its eggs, to give the offspring a chance for survival. But, since Nature is not a person, our personification being merely of convenience, how can Nature have an end in view? Here the Christian jumps up to say that all these great "plans" are the workings of the mind of God. So! A little while back the Christian was opposing a law of Nature, but now he is deifying Nature. Concisely: when Nature pleases him, the Christian says that it is the mind of God; but when it displeases him, he dissociates it from God. Who attributes to God the atrocious weather during Britain's coal shortage of 1946-47, or dust storms, or tornadoes, or floods; or plagues carried by rats and lice; or V. D. carried by innocent-intentioned children; and so on ad infinitum? To me all that line of thought seems puerile, essentially false, and no help to the growing minds of our children. Obviously, if you claim that God is omnipotent, you make him responsible for everything. This is one of the oldest theological problems of the world. It has distressed countless numbers of people, and will distress countless more so long as men deem Nature concerned in kindness or cruelty with themselves. For me it does not exist. I regard it as one more of those philosophic puzzles which the tireless brain of man has invented for self-torture: as merely a philosophic dialectic. But, then, I think of God as a spirit and, so, not dealing in matter. (See SEVEN REASONS WHY A SCIENTIST BELIEVES IN GOD, by A. Cressy Morrison, *Reader's Digest,* Dec. 1946, cart-before-horse, if ever I saw such an argument; and I BELIEVE IN GOD AND IN EVOLUTION, Wm. W. Keen, M. D., 1923, in

which the physical is well argued, but the spiritual belief is merely stated.)

This teleology which we have been discussing does not run *ad saecula saeculorum*. After a various period, Nature seems to lose interest in one purpose-cycle, and to take up another. There is no discovered relationship between these purposes, no means of evaluation. Action and reaction, resulting in the appearance of purposeless evolution, supplies the only key. We know that many of the smaller parts of the body, perhaps all the parts, appear to be instinct with intelligence, and zealous to keep the body in health; such as the adrenals, the phagocytes, the responses of the heart, the coagulation of the blood, that fear gives speed to the feet. Consider the cilia in the nasal cavities, in the throat and in other passages, backlashing matter toward the nose, and similar evidences; working for themselves, of course, but also—and this is the puzzle—for the welfare of the great animal of which they are so tiny a part. But the general law seems to be, Action and Reaction. And yet, for all this intricate system of protection, the body is always susceptible to immense injury both from within and from without. Accepting the thesis of Planning, we come to the astounding result of *Cross-Planning*. Omnipotence here is out of the question. Here is plain rivalry, bacteria and the carnivora eager to attack our bodies while these same bodies stand ready to nullify any attack. Teen-age students of physiology know all this; but Christian teaching blandly insists on One Plan, on *The Great Planner;* and so do these scientists whom I have cited.

The trend, if any, toward Tennyson's "far-off, divine" event I consider to be of but factitious interest to mankind

today; just as our present condition would have been of factitious interest to the men of 50,000 B. C. But Christian teachings habitually soar, as it were, through aeons of time on the wings of a sounding phrase.

Inorganic forms present a suggestion of purpose; but, upon reflection, we cannot see much purpose in setting the Rocky Mountains in one place rather than in another. Wherever placed, mountains make their own climate, largely; and that blind force, gravity, makes the subsequent configuration of the earth about them. The rich river valleys of silt from the mountains we know to be the work of gravity; and that the processes of digestion require the pull of gravity. Can we thank God for gravity? Can we feel a personal relationship with the god of gravity? Would that not be merely the personalizing of a force? But that is what religionists do when they involve their religion with the physical universe. We cannot wonder at this, since it is contemporaneous with man's first effort to explain his world. There is some ground for wonder that there is so general acceptance by educated folk of the sheer guess which appealed to primitive man. The devout, who bless God for the fruits of the earth, might carry their thinking a little further; whereupon they would perceive that without these fruits, that is, without a favorable environment, we should not be here. We are the result of conditions; but primitives could not see that. It is deplorable that the majority of our teachers also ignore it. The common attribution to God of comforts above necessities, again, is a complete misconception. Improvements are man's work and we all know it, even though our preachers talk otherwise. Even some of the animals make improvements upon their environments. Do birds find the trees

equipped with dainty nests for the security of their young; or beavers find dams and ponds, and houses rising like bubbles out of the water? Perversity still controls much of our supernatural thinking, consequent upon mixing the physical with the spiritual.

Teleology, other than temporary, is hard to find. But our minds are geared to teleology. We expect to find every animal, every plant, to have a reason for its behavior; every part of the organism to have a necessary function, which we call the reason for its being. For many of us here it is too much to imagine a world without a final plan. Christian teaching opposes the final planlessness of Nature, the concept that Nature's Law of Teleology is but short-term. How long-term teleology could benefit our short-term lives I cannot guess. It is only Man's egotism which makes his own benefit the Law of the Universe.

HUMAN DESTINY *by P. L. du Nouy*

I pause here to insert a quotation from p. 82: "If, instead of studying the particular mechanism of evolution corresponding to the individual course of each rivulet, we try to understand the *very fact* of evolution, we are completely lost unless we bring in some kind of finality. Chance alone, as we said before, is radically incapable of explaining an irreversible *evolutive* phenomenon." And my comment: A rivulet down a mountain illustrates the irreversible evolutive phenomenon of a fertile valley made of the disintegrating mountain brought in the rivulet by gravity, with neither intent nor knowledge. Moreover, no geologist will call it a finality, since he assumes that the mountain will wear down to the plain; that the sea may flood it again; and that new mountains may be raised *ad saecula saeculorum,* as in the past.

The routine of reproduction is an irreversible, evolutive phenomenon. Who but religionists claim for it an end, finality? I repeat, with religionists one does not argue, because they rely on intuition, the something-tells-me complex. By mere assertion they set up premises from which they draw, with much logic, many conclusions glorious or not, according to our local ideas. In America we hold many conclusions of primitive religions to be not glorious. Hence, the Christian assertion of finality: The end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever, can hardly end our quest for finality in reproduction. You may set a point on any cycle, and say that the cycle is complete when brought around to that point; and you may call it finality. But that means nothing, since any point begins a new cycle. The end (intent) of the bud is the flower, and so forth. When that cycle has been completed, you may see a new cycle to a field of flowers, to a forest, to fallen growths, to humus, in another cycle. Our minds set up cycles as laws of growth, but see no finality. Mere repetition of generations cannot be held to be finality; and, if we fix upon developments a billion years hence, we still have not established finality—even if we comprehend such a period, or find any rationality in the concept. Irreversible, evolutive phenomena are the commonest things in life, but are still inexplicable. That they prove a Plan appears to be merely a religious assumption. The scientist and the semi-literate can only exclaim in unison: "Ain't Nature grand!"

I blandly ignore the suggested argument for a First Cause. For a scientist, with sketchy argument and all solemnity, to re-state that affirmation at this late time appears to me hardly worthy. Presumably, man has discoursed in

that fashion since he first questioned his world. I recall walking upon the "singing sands" of the North Shore of Massachusetts Bay with George Edward Woodberry, whose memory was lately honored by Columbia University. It was fifty years ago, and the First Cause was enjoying a revival of interest. So I, a college boy, said to my professor in the cant phrase of that day: "If you found a watch on the sands we are treading, would you not say that there must have been a watchmaker?" Professor Woodberry murmured some mild objection. Callow youth that I was, I would not press the argument. Of some things one may say: As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. No, I am not rehearsing that argument. My argument runs to the embroideries which Christian religionists have made, are making, and will long continue to make upon the Riddle of the Universe. I am trying to lift the argument above the world of matter into the spiritual world which, according to the evolutionist, evolved out of the world of matter, instead of preceding it. To the evolutionist the concept of *de super,* as the concept of creation, merely leaps the gap; it does not bridge it. Finally, has any religion held so devitalized an idea of God as the scientist's First Cause, Anti-Chance, or similar? Religion cannot build upon so sterile a concept. A Christian's faith would starve on such poor pabulum. The contrast is overwhelming. As to the concept of a First Cause, I repeat the old Latin query, popular fifty years ago: *Cui bono?* What good is that to me? We're here because we're here.

Obviously, the Circumstance, this electro-chemical matrix which we denominate the Universe, can have no conclusion. If it could, it would have ended aeons ago, before it began, so to speak. Conceivably, its interior re-

lationships may change. By definition, it can have no exterior. Imagination may toy with this idea, but what can we make of it? Having posited eternity, and an eternal inhabitant of space, we search for a purpose great enough to match our huge position. But, like Archimedes, we lack a fulcrum to prize our vast project into place. Hence, for the lifetime of man, his seers will preach their suppositions; and that is well. The purpose of life is to live; but to do that, we need some more specific purpose. Such purposes are abundant for the little-thinking. The seers appeal to great thoughts.

I now leave a question with the assumption-of-a-plan fellowship. You see that the watch was planned by a rational mind; that it has a purpose, a use, do you not? I now ask you what is the purpose, the use of our earth, of our universe? Until you prove that purpose, I may declare a plan for a watch, but how can you declare a plan for a universe?

We have now come full-circle to the conclusion of the sages: That life is sufficient for itself. It needs no final purpose. Christian teaching, outside of sublimated ethics, has always been largely an escapism: escape from death, escape from strain, escape from grief, escape from life-as-it-is. Just as monks and nuns have been escapists from the dangers and problems of life into a monotonous anticipation of death; have been opposers of Nature's Laws of Life—motion, reproduction—so, Christian teaching has fostered escape into a dreamland psychologically like a Chinaman's in his opium bunk. This is in startling contrast to all of animate nature below the human level. Such animate nature adjusts itself to its environment, and so beautifully that we admire, and give glory to God. We

only rebel against our environment. (I hardly need declare that many Christians lead lives of noble effort; yet it is true that escapism bulks large in Christian teaching.)

To avoid the horror of uncertainty as to a future in which we shall have no part (what aberrancy!), Christians run up one blind alley after another. Their bishops recite: "Ye shall know the truth; and the truth shall make you free." That has been my chief interest—to know the truth. So I part from the bishops who go on preaching the falsehoods of material interests brought down from "the times of this ignorance" which, Paul says, "God winked at, but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts XVII:30) Paul heard a voice (the voice of reason): "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." Bismarck, also, put it bluntly: "Only a fool denies facts." *Who criticizes priests for their preaching the beauty of holiness?* Dictum: *That religion which mismarries itself to the science of its time invites internal conflict as scientific knowledge increases.*

III

I think it likely that hasty readers of this Argument have decided that, really, I disavow the spiritual; that I believe, finally, only in fang and claw. So difficult is it to disentangle the physical from the spiritual in the web of Christian teaching. Yet it was just the weaving of these two strands, the spiritual with the physical, which made sure the ghastly record of religious persecution. There were other reasons; but religious fanaticism put the bite in it. So I protest against such judgments. Let our religion be spiritual! As for going back to the brute level, how absurd!

That would be the antithesis of the evolutionary process to which I stand committed. In Nature we do find throwbacks. Does the disavowal of the physical in religion prove a throwback? Quite the contrary. For me, spirituality is the sublimation of ethics, holiness the product of spirituality.

This Argument has been written about only a modicum of the people, namely, the common type of Christian teachers and acceptors; and yet, a considerable number. Surrounded by that number, hearing their discussions and witnessing their behavior, we are prone to forget the great majority of people in the world whom our argument interests no more than do our flowers interest the fish in the sea. It may be only habitual egomania, common to proselyting religions, which keeps us convinced that only the wicked disagree with us. Who does not know the self-satisfied smugness with which the *unco-guid* regard the world? It is hard to convince such people of the bland disinterest of the most of the world. But this minority is a large number to hold their hands over their eyes, lest they see too much. I have written in the hope of encouraging a few of them to look about. Think not, O Holy Ones, that I am impious when I repeat the words of your Master: "That they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart and be converted, and I should heal them." (Matt. XII:15)

I should deem it mean-spirited to make people unhappy in their beliefs. One said to me: "Why not let people believe what seems good to them?" Is that what Christian missionaries do? The answer to his question was suggested at the end of the second section. Millions of young people are being taught a religion which mismarries the science of

a bygone day; and some are suffering, suffering greatly as their scientific knowledge increases. I write specially for them. For they can hardly read a book of physical origins and development—embryology, zoology, or geology—and still retain respect for the primitive science in the Bible. For instance, the naive Biblical declaration that the rainbow is God's sign (Gen. IX:8-17), when any child has seen a "rainbow" in a waterfall, a fountain, or even in the spray from your garden hose when the sun strikes across it. Some teen-agers understand that there is no physical bow in the sky. The appearance is produced by light-rays angled from the droplets to your eye, whether from sky or stream. But to many minds the Sacred Book is final. Educated men and women know all this; but they ignore it all when they teach in Sunday Schools. They prefer to let sleeping dogs lie even if, to do so, they have to—well, well! (Much in little is to be found in the book, I BELIEVE IN GOD AND IN EVOLUTION, by William W. Keen, M. D.)

IV

As one of the Laws of Life, I mentioned Diversification, or Variation. Here is a deep puzzle. Does a puzzle negate the primary facts? No. Life and its first laws, motion, self-preservation, reproduction (which is but self-preservation of the species) remain as sure as ever. But whence variations, sports, in the physical and in the moral worlds? Dr. Davis, of Harvard, lectured on "The Natural History of Goodness." He derived goodness from self-interest more and more experienced and, so, enlightened. We are now accustomed to think of sexuality as the basis of behavior which we had not related to sex. It may hurt a young and

doting mother to think of her little child's outstretched arms as sex-motivated, since most of our thought of sex is gross. All I mean to relate is that the untaught, unreflective, unperceptive person fails to recognize what is evident to any student of the matter. So it is generally unperceived that there are occasional evidences of morality in nature. (Here I use "morality" in the common sense, meaning "regardless of self-interest," "the-man-who-sweareth-to-his own-hurt-and-changeth-not" type.) I regard these evidences as mere sports appearing on stems far removed from the anthropoid. Compare the dog's affection for his master with that of the cat reared in the same family; or the long affection for each other of two geldings with the brief mother-love or sex-love in horses. These rarities I call sports in the psychic life of brute nature. Whence the sport of altruism in ants? I repeat, whence these sports?

Going back to the great laws of life, motion and self-preservation, we find that the seeming teleology of nature requires that the hungers for food and sex-satisfaction be dominant. Hence, in spite of all obstacles, with small exception, men satisfy these hungers throughout the world. Only religionists throughout the world have the self-assurance to combat nature's primal laws. The extremists "mortify the flesh." With religionists one does not argue; but one observes that, since obedience to Nature's Law is the First Law of Health; and since Health is necessary in the larger sense, to Virtue, do the religionists know what they are doing? May it not be that some of our Christian teaching is maleficent?

The scientist who wrote the "Seven Reasons" argued: Because the requirements for the origination of life are extraordinarily complex and, so, could not have happened, therefore the beginning of life must have been planned, and, hence, a "Planner"; just as we are accustomed to hear from the pulpit, where rebuttal is not to be feared. Of course, we respect the cloth, but not every scientist; so let us give this scientist the works.

When you say that life's intricacy presupposes a planner, you must mean a planner for every form of life. But some of the "plans" by which life is passed on are intricate beyond belief. To think that the salamander, an amphibian form of life ante-dating man, must divide its egg-cell, waste into the body the excess hepatin with which the cell was charged, and then wait for the sperm-cell to pass through the like process! Or try to think reverently that God planned the disgusting process of the mating of the hermaphrodite black slugs. Or guess why it was "planned" that the male of the midwife toad should carry the female's eggs under the skin of his back to incubate them. Why the all but infinite variations of the mating process in nature? If we are "the children of God" "made in His image," why are not our minds genetically like His? Instead, the intricacies of Nature seem often beyond reason or mercy; as when the female spider kills and eats the male after copulation. We are told that the wisdom of man is foolishness with God; but here it seems that the wisdom of God is foolishness with considerate men. Why should our nervous system, normally an alarmist and, so, a protector of the body, respond to excitation beyond the need for

bodily protection? To say it is God's will—the endless, screaming agonies over the earth—is only to beg the question in a paltry manner.

The reproductive process of, say, mammalia is so intricate, seemingly planned with such meticulous foresight that, if we ask: Why the planning? the answer is, of course, to overcome the diffculties. Then the question: Can there be difficulties for Omniscient-Omnipotence (Omnisciopotence)? Again, compare the intricacy of the alimentary canal in mammalia with the simplicity of that in certain water-birds. Assuredly, Omnisciopotence could have made everything simple. Then why did He not? And why did he make the surf-fish exceptional in being viviparous?

Religionists may be congratulated upon their escape from the madness of trying to answer the questions of which the foregoing are but a sample. They simply assert, and try to believe, that God knows best. The question: Why did Deity give man a mind, and then block it? they do not answer. But the scientist, to whom the "out" of the religionist seems unattractive, is not driven mad by the marvel of observed life-forms. To him they are of beauty and of wonder, even when inexplicable. The scientist can live with mystery. Leave out planning, and call it development. Then you will not be driven up this blind alley.

What the scientist sees is the appearance of mind in the parts of life-forms, plant and animal; not a complete, rationalizing, reflective mind, but enough to direct the life-form to its preservation, individual and/or racial. Flight by the gazelle preserves the individual and the race; but spawning by the salmon, while killing the individual, preserves the race.

If we think of a horse as a colony, as a city is a colony,

we can think of the organs of the horse as we think of the departments of the city, and of the cells of the horse as of the citizens. Mind runs through the whole organism, both of horse and city. In this concept, instead of one Creator of innumerable forms of life with innumerable conflicts resulting and the appearance of cross-planning making a mockery of it all—in this concept we have innumerable self-creators each planning for itself, a condition which we see everywhere. In this concept, the conflicts are mere developments and are not planned.

When we examine the suggested solution of the problem presented by the multiplicity and complexity of life-forms, vastly more in torrid and humid areas than in dry or frigid regions, we come upon a new problem: Where is location of this mind? We easily locate the mind of advanced forms of animal life in the brain, in the head of the "colony"; but we find no brain in plant forms, nor in the "departments" of the animal, the stomach, the blood, or other parts of the body.

This concept, mind diffused throughout the body of plant and animal, is alluring when we consider those plants and animals which may be reproduced by severing. Any gardener knows what plants he can reproduce by sticking a branch into the soil; and any student of lowly life-forms knows which insects and lower life-forms he may reproduce by subdivision. These detached parts have no head; yet they develop and show the same care for themselves as did their parents. Meanwhile, the parents often develop a replacement for the part detached. How can all this be achieved without directing intelligence, some sort of mind?

Again, this concept is alluring as solving the first prob-

lem, namely, the seeming self-direction of the parts; but the new problem which it brings is as difficult as the other. It is as difficult to imagine an incorporeal mind as to imagine a hand without flesh and blood. Man's imagined spirits always appear in bodily form. Nevertheless, mentality thinly diffused throughout the body, the brain in highly developed organisms being the place of precipitation, is a concept of a certain plausibility held by an increasing number of people who are above mere guessing. This means to me, unit mind; and not, universal mind.

From the pulpit of *Reader's* for March, 1947, another scientist-turned-preacher proves the same thesis: THE DIVINE PLANNER. Oh, but we have millions of such misguiding preachers! How can they fail to see the hazardous struggle of every living thing beyond man's care? Recall what you have read of life and death in the Brazilian jungle, in any jungle. Such planning would be ironic, the bitter jest of the gods, in short, hellish. For that sort of "Planner" you must not use the Christian's word, God, for the Christian's God is an all-wise, loving Father. In the gentle words of the Greek sculptor two thousand years ago: Shoemaker (scientist), stick to your last. One fact stands out clearly: Men bemused will believe the impossible.

I feel that I should amplify that thought a little: The inapplicability of the term "God" to the scientist's conclusion of a "Planner," even if that scientist is right. "God" in all tongues and places stands for, not a supreme but, a superior being. (Monotheism has not been general.) Various religions give various attributes to their god or gods, by no means always what Christians ascribe to theirs. But, since these *Reader's* scientists are writing where Christianity is the predominating religion, they ought not

to use a Christian term out of its Christian meaning, for such method is unscientific. If the scientist is not scientifically precise in his terminology, he vitiates his own argument by introducing uncertainty and, forthwith, controversy. One need not be a scientist to denounce the scientist's use of the Christian's term "God" for that vague rationality called "anti-chance."

I said, "Such planning . . . would be hellish." I now quote from Webster's dictionary: "exotospore, the malaria parasite is injected into the human body in this stage by the mosquito." This exotospore is a spore stage in the life history of certain protozoans. But what planning! (People of little knowledge of life-forms may learn much by merely leafing through a large illustrated dictionary. An active mind will ask its own questions.) Again I quote, THE EARTH AND ITS RHYTHMS, Schuchert and La Verne, p. 259: "At the end of the Cambrian [period] they [trilobites] began to show decline in numbers and variety, and their death knell [that is, of the race] was undoubtedly sounded by the rising cephalopods that began to feed upon them at the close of the Cambrian. These new carnivorous aggressors were active swimmers with great eyes, and were protected by a heavier shell, while the trilobites were sluggish and poor swimmers, with coverings that afforded little protection against the firm biting beaks of the cephalopods. Moreover, during the Silurian [period] the fishes as well began to menace the trilobites, and in this unequal battle the latter finally succumbed, the last ones occurring in Permian time," some tens of millions of years later. It takes a picture to bring this home to us; but we easily imagine the despair of a hen or a cottontail caught by a fox. Here are two scientists giving us the story of most of

the life, for incredible periods, upon this earth. Meanwhile, in flat contradiction, the preachers of various religions continue to improvise the story of God's love for his creatures. But, again, "That which is flesh is flesh," and, "God is a spirit." I see no reason to believe that a spiritual being had anything to do with the development of life-forms on this earth.

The early, easy concept of creation I dismiss along with other semi-primitive thinking. Was a colt created the day it was born? Was it not a colt the day before? From the day of inception[6] to the day of birth, on what day was it created? Now, a colt is an organism of very many cells developed from two cells; and "creation" is an organism of organisms somewhat similarly developed, or evolved. There never was an act of creation; and, by the whole theory of evolution, there never could be one. The colt's first two cells came from the colt's parents, grandparents, and so back to eohippus, the dawn-horse, the size of today's fox; and so on back to the amoeba—and let us stop there. (It is a curious fact that there is a model of eohippus in the museum of a Catholic chapel near here.) We find no act of creation, a concept on a par with the magician's act of clapping his hands and producing a rabbit. So we may, but will not, drop all talk of God's love for his creatures: They are not creatures, and they are not His, since the spirit disowns the flesh. If Christian ministers will not take that plain statement from the lips of Jesus, why do they ask us to heed His words? "For they that are after the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace; because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it

is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be; and they that are in the flesh cannot please God." (Romans VIII: 5-8)

But why are there no fish in the desert sands, birds in the depths of the sea, orchids on mountaintops, or life on the moon? Our scientist tells us that, were the sun's radiation less or more, the earth's tilt changed, the ocean a few feet deeper, there'd be no life here. The moon gives him the answer. Of course, life must have its necessary environment. All over the earth we see that life-forms follow environment, changing with a descending ice-cap, and changing back as the ice-cap retreats; verdure starting up with the warmth of Spring, and dying when the environment becomes hostile. That scientist's view puts the cart before the horse, as I said before, and calls for an unnatural explanation. To explain the complexity of nature by the device of a planner is only to involve yourself in deeper complexity. We may leave that to the unscientific Christian, who is plainly at his wit's end.

Take iron ore: Was it planned when this earth was forming so that Man, two billion years later, could extract iron with qualities very different from the ore? And to be so extracted for only how long? And so for all the products of the earth of which man, oh, so lately, has made use? This is the child's concept. "Like as a father pitieth his children," and puts everything here for our use. And now we seem to be overdoing it, and learning what we'd better never know since our right use of it is seen to be in doubt. Is our misuse of materials, planned in the beginning, to be thought a part of the Great Plan? Such excessive invention "in the beginning" becomes absurdity; the reasoning becomes unreasonable. Also, in the rule that living forms

carry destructive organisms, parasites, upon or within themselves; as if the inventor of a cotton gin had also invented machinery within the gin to destroy the gin. What would be said of the sanity of such an inventor?

"Everything here for our use." This concept is, perhaps, the most general expression of the religious mind's defiance of all observation and experience. Only the beasts and primitive humanity have reason to thank God for His blessings, because they only are adjusted to their environment. The whole story of civilization, from the apple which he eats to the home in which he sleeps, is an expression of man's dissatisfaction with Nature, of man's work to improve upon God's work. That we have an earth upon which to live is merely to say that our life has its necessary environment. This is banality.

The only major teleology which we can see upon this earth is the teleology of reproduction. All the minor teleologies of the developing organism—skeleton to support the body, muscles and sinews to operate it, skin to cover it, brain to direct it, and so forth—all may be said to be for the housing of the sex glands, for the main purpose, end, teleology, of reproduction. Now, this major teleology is defeated by all the devourers of grains, fruits, flesh all over the earth. The fruits, the grains, the eggs which we harvest are prevented from carrying on their reproductive function. Must we say that reproduction is God's Plan and, at the same time, say that to defeat reproduction is, also, God's Plan? (Trivial suppositions are uninteresting.) About all that the devourers do to forward reproduction is to reproduce themselves, and generally on a far lower scale.

The posit that we cannot understand the Infinite Mind

appears to me to be a flight from reason; just as it always has been a deep puzzle how a good God could leave mankind so long in the dark as to himself. "Oh, if I but knew where I might find Him!" (Job XXIII:3) If this is beyond our understanding, why should any finite mind undertake to tell us about the Mind Infinite?[7] But that is what swarms of Christians and other religionists are always doing, and some scientists as well. The easy assumption of a "Planner" runs into the usual difficulties of easy assumptions, which usually are merely the refuges of weak or wearied minds.

Of course, I realize the tautology, the all but banality of my statement, a while back, that life must have its necessary environment. Well, compare the Christian's statement: God is good (good is good), or the Moslem's statement: There is no god but God. Still, you can check my statement by changing the environment.

"It is generally conceded that the human body is a product of long, slow evolutionary change" (*Natural History,* Dec. 1947, p. 451). Surely, we may add, not only the human body, but all other animate bodies. The very rocks and hills are the "product of long, slow evolutionary change." Now, what does this generally conceded knowledge do to the concept of a Plan, of a Planner? Well, evidently, it means that the Planner has been changing his Plan for all eternity; not only for the lifetime of our little earth, two billion—some say three and one-half billion years— but for the lifetime of, say, Betelgeuse, or, better, from the beginning. When the concept is stated so briefly, hasty thinkers may imagine the concept possible; but to those people who examine the proposition more and more in detail, it becomes less and less acceptable. You may say, in Eastern oratory,[8] that every grain of sand on all the

beaches of the world was planned; but just start counting the grains on one beach. How many beaches are there? Then start counting all the pebbles and every other little thing; such as: What per cent of moisture evaporates from a clothesline when the temperature is 50°, humidity 20 per cent, per minute; T 60, H 26 per second, ad infinitum. Ridiculous? No. You can't expect God to forestall disaster or to heal a dangerous inflammation unless He knows about the causative bacilli, or whatever.[9] Self-centered Christians ignore physically little things until *invaluable-I* am affected. Then they are sure that God planned it all. Clearly, such concepts, so easily tossed out, have value in believers' eyes in proportion to their size and vagueness. Examined, they become merely a dialectician's game. So the easy assumption of a Plan, of a Planner, becomes the sport of dialecticians, a source of endless debate. We are discovering a complexity in nature bewildering even to our sophisticated modernity, when the ten-thousandth part of an inch is a commonplace, and chlorophyll's reaction in the millionth of a second is carefully studied. Such complexity points to development, rather than plan, for explanation.

If you toss a handful of dried beans on the parlor floor, will the resulting pattern, the result of many forces, prove that you had planned it, even if the pattern suggests something? Is not such idea a *post hoc propter hoc* fallacy again? Given the force of gravity, the number and texture of the beans, and other factors, the result was bound to follow; just as lava flows from a volcano, or shaving-cream from your tube. Such is my view of the universe: The continually changing result of forces continuing from the beginning, if ever there was a beginning. When you consider the revo-

lutions of the earth around the sun already as of the order of two billion—some say three and a half-billion—the idea of a beginning becomes illusory.

Is not the single force of gravity producing innumerable patterns continually? Regard the patterns on the beach, on every beach, after every wave. Can our scientists enumerate the forces which produced a single wave? Do they think that a single pattern "happened"? If not, do they say it was planned? And every wave charged with myriads of living particles soon to nourish other life-forms? Is not the whole fancy conceived in vagueness, and lost in complexity? Finally, our scientists, just as the preachers, are mixing spirit and flesh again. Can we not preach honor, courage, kindness, holiness without involving our understanding of atoms, the temperatures of the stars, or the chemistry of a cell? Are we materialists, and able to think of God only in terms of matter? What ails Christians and their protagonists, the quick-conclusion scientists? Hindsight, studying but a part of what has occurred, declares God's Plan; and knows not that itself is but a mere casuistry, an intellectual deceit, which, sincere, becomes a very childishness.

SUMMARY

Listen, Scientist; come here and listen, Scientist. You say that we see a Plan and that, therefore, there must be a PLANNER. Here is a part of your PLAN: Millions born, millions die so that a percentage may live. Pain developed as warning for the body. Excruciating pain developed in bodies unable to heed the warnings. Brain developed out of nerves. Will developed out of brain. Brain developed beyond control of will—more pain. In sum: Planned waste for a percentage of success without thought of mercy. Here,

gentlemen Scientists, I present to you your great plan, whose planner you dare not call GOD.

Questioning the wisdom of the Planner is a common habit, even for Christians. A religious silk mill manager in Bethlehem, Pa., in 1899, said to me: "I wish that the Almighty had arranged for continuance of mankind by other means than sex." That is, he wished to take "omni" out of omniscience, and to insert a chunk of his own wisdom. Millions of people feel the like urge, expressed uncountable times in only the past half-century.

As for omniscience, it is a common thought that God knows every thought in our hearts. Christians even teach that God often directs our thinking toward himself (Rom. XIX:18). Two billion people now, and how many people in all the past; and how many billion thoughts? (Ps. 139:4). If a mosquito poisons us seriously, God is thought to know of it. Know all the mosquitoes? Know the whereabouts of every poisonous spider? Know the ever-changing pattern of flies in a shaft of sunshine? Of course not. Dr. Wilton Merle Smith spoke to this effect in the Central Presbyterian Church, New York City, half a century ago. But God is thought to know all those things which do, or may, concern his children. Ah! Egocentrism and egomania, uninteresting to the scientist unless a psychologist. Also, a seemingly necessary limitation of omniscience. But an old friend of the philosopher-dialectician type said to me recently: "Infinite knowledge must know every wave of the sea, and all about it." That, of course, is but a start. Let us now undertake to enumerate every living thing, every thought, movement, insect, leaf; aye, and every microscopic part thereof, past, present, and future by seconds. But where to draw the line? *Conclusion*: the religionist's habitual ascription of his experiences to a mysterious Be-

ing, saying, He knows, is psychologically on a level with the stock-dabbler's ascription of market movements to a mysterious power which he calls "they." Obviously, as we are the children of our parents, so these concepts which I have cited are but the tag-ends of the child mentality of long ago, most reverenced by the most childish today. This is a perversion of worship, which should be reserved for what is true and good, rather than for what is merely old.

We personify the world about us, calling it Nature. We think that in Nature we see purpose, effort, success, and many immediate frustrations. We see clearly that there is endless repetition, a cyclical movement returning to the starting point so often and over such extent of time as to make questionable any major purpose, except, perhaps, that of mere activity. This is too wonderful for us; it is high; we cannot attain unto it (Ps. 139:6). Thus we turn from our concept of Nature to our concept of Nature's God. Just as we personify Nature, so we personify the world of our ideals, calling it God. Just as we think of Him as informing Nature, so we think of Him as informing ourselves, regarding ourselves as apart from Nature (which we regard objectively). Of course, when we consider our personification of God and Nature, we realize that they are merely an evasion, an escape from the effort of definition. Finding that, for all our efforts, we cannot fit together the pieces of the puzzle, we say: God knows. This, from the highest intellect to the meanest, is our one escape from the insanity of excessive thought. We crave direction, certainty, and approval of our best effort; so we postulate the appropriate Deity. At the same time we blandly ignore the percentage of human beings who have felt no such needs, and have had no such thoughts. Feeling the psychological

necessity for inclusiveness, we make ourselves the World. This is an expression of the yearning called Herd Instinct. Restless thought is the gadfly of humanity.[10]

Gentlemen of the Academy, is there anything in the Five Questions in the Survey which so much as recognizes any of the matters which I have discussed? Is not that the habit of religionists: blandly to ignore all that we know about life while propounding large, vague, imposing questions? It is not the true scientist's way. He surveys the whole field of his knowledge before he asks one or two leading questions pertinent to his search, ever mindful of the backdrop of sixty million years. Also, he readily modifies his theories in accordance with the latest discoveries; for the scientist has no wishes. But the advocates of *de super* will not change until they find themselves "out of step." Thus have our churches been modernized, reluctantly. Spirituality, ethics, morals are proper subjects for Christian teaching; but not the gross materialism with which it is cluttered today. For all their forced concessions, Christians claim always to be right; "for this people's heart is waxed gross," as I said before. I repeat: Religions degenerate from the spirituality of the founder to the gross materialism of the multitude, which scarcely half the people half-believe.

In our study we discovered certain practices in Christian teaching, and we indicated an adverse judgment based upon rationality: e.g., escapes from death at sea by reason of prayer in the face of the fact that millions have perished for all their prayers; special creation in face of our knowledge of the development of life-forms through past aeons, to mention only two. We will now consider dispassionately, and as reasonably as in us lies as to the facts within our

knowledge, the chief characteristic of this teaching which is so often valued inversely to its comprehension; and by so many nominal Christians scarcely considered at all.

The fundamental characteristic of Christian teaching is supposition. To the scientist, supposition is merely a suggestion for examination, experiment, testing, and proof. To the Christian, the major suppositions require no proof. He declares them to be self-evident. What are they? First and fundamentally, that all good comes from above: *omne bonum de super.* The other suppositions easily follow: That there is but one God; that He is perfect love, wisdom, of complete power; that God arranges the lives of nations and individuals; that He sent Jesus to save us and those near us and, probably, those in remote parts from sin to an immortality of blessedness, provided they believe on Him. This excludes those who never heard of Him (John III:16). Other suppositions, more and more detailed. In suppositions, as in lies, one leads to another. Any study of religions shows this morphology. Thus we see all Christian teaching based upon suppositions self-evident only to the believers. To them the scientific method of examination and proof is anathema. The systems are incompatible. Apologists' efforts[11] to find some trifling agreement are not of interest to us. The so-called warfare between science and religion is a misnomer, and solely for the sake of brevity. A system of supposition and a system of proof are basically different. Can there be warfare between geology and psychology, or any other unrelated science?

It would be love's labors lost for me to present the case for the religionist. He is doing that fairly convincingly to the multitudes all over the earth. Since not primary argument but, rather, faith is the only requisite, believers are won by dramatic means. Once the major supposition is

accepted, logic, posing as reason, explains the rest.

Now, faith[12] is one of the finest things yet developed upon this earth. In its highest form it is so wonderful and so beautiful as to be one of our greatest uplifting elements. But faith devoid of any reason appears to me as deplorable credulity. "True Believers," the religionist term, run the gamut of credulity. Their dicta mean nothing to the scientist.

The first fundamental characteristic of Christian teaching is, then, supposition; and their supposition, taproot and all its branches, supports an enormous spread of doctrine. Only the harsh experiences of life control the ramifications of their assertiveness. In this paper we considered a very few experiences, samples of the millions which might be cited.

Those who live in a world of supposition lose track of the fact that it is an unreal world. Even when jarred by a harsh fact do they seek explanation in a new supposition, or in mere plaintive wonder. It is a harsh fact of life that death comes to all and sundry, young and old, by reason of physiological conditions. How can any developed mind express wonder, or question God's goodness, whenever the physiological condition of one of the family results in death? But such psychic reaction persists generation after generation among the religious. Development of sexuality in teen-agers constitutes a harsh fact which Christian teaching ignores. Christian teaching all but condemns sexuality in toto, scarcely admitting its function in maintaining human existence. Parents, forgetting their own youth, demand an austerity which every generation violates. The cardinal command of Mother Nature, REPRODUCE, they blandly ignore; or else they subordinate it to their laws

and convenience. Their lack of success constitutes a continuing problem. Greed is another harsh fact. Its root lies in Nature's law of self-preservation. Christian teaching heartily condemns it, and goes to the absurd extreme, if taken literally, of commanding: Give to him that asketh. Of course, it is living in an unreal world to imagine that you should, or could, give to every asker. We know that the general idea of charity is uplifting. We know, also, that it long was carried to a debasing extent, resulting in wilful bodily deforming; and that even now, in America, it needs intelligent restraint.

Examining the derivative suppositions of Christian teaching, we find them quite unnecessary for the ethical or spiritual life. They have one ethical content: a zeal for amelioration; but this is small justification for acceptance of the suppositions. Parables for the "sheep," yes; but let not the teachers forget the truths which the parables portray. Our profoundest teachers, the philosophers and scientists, are not given to parables. Let the popular preachers remain true to them, as Jesus was true to the essentials of Hebrew law.[13] There is no need whatsoever to deviate from the truth.

Christian teaching is a schematic development largely directed to reconciling spirituality and ethics with the physical universe. The self-assurance of the religionist is impervious to the doubts of rationality, holding them to be of the devil. Christian teaching is met by education or by indifference. Dogmatism is on the wane, at present; but there is no assurance for the future. History records the fluctuations of the faiths.[14]

EPILOGUE

Nature's Way—[15] call it Plan, if you like—is plain before us. Why do we not see it? Well, why do educated people, sitting in a large and lovely garden, think of it as the abode of peace? The ceaseless murder going on before their eyes as the birds by day and the bats at eve, with no more passion than a cow grazing, devour the luckless insects, these people do not see. Anything beyond their own interest these people do not see. Nature deals with masses. Individuals? Bah! They are too easily replaceable. But how many men and women see that?

We should beware of those who demand that we jump through their hoops, for that has made the disgraceful record of proselyting religions. How could there be religious strife, if we strove only for virtue? It is time for Christians to drop all reference to the physical; whereupon they will find that they have dropped their most controversial dogmas. "Pure religion and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." What are we to think of the minds of those people who believe any falsehood, if only a priest[16] speaks it?

The record tells us that God and religion follow the times. The God of the Psalmist David, of Luther, of Calvin is not the God of the Christian today; neither is their religion, their morality sufficient today. Hence, it seems indicated that we should look not back to a concept of God, but forward.

"Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth" (Rom. 14:22).

NOTES

1. The assumption that there is a Being "Centre and soul of every sphere, Yet to each loving heart how near!" in the words of a familiar hymn, pleases very many millions. Other assumptions, stated with equal assurance, please other millions. And, again, others please others. But an assumption, however strongly stated, remains a supposition; and its statement remains a mere asseveration. Freshmen in Logic 1 learn that. But, in this case, the unpopularity of the opposition and the position and power of the supporters, together with man's inherited credulity, will cause general, if often unthinking, assent. To most people, probably, denial is unthinkable. Hence the term: Riddle of the universe.

2. Question 3. Compare Buddha's divine origin c. 500 B.C., and ditto Red Men of Nigeria, Persia, Egyptian, Greek, Roman. It is a natural and, therefore, common concept.

3. Odyssey, Pope's translation. "For God hath smoothed the waters of the deep."

4. Knowledge. John 3:8. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth." This was before our science of the winds, meteorology.

5. The learning of nearby Greece seems not to have touched a Palestine given over to monotonous searching of their scriptures (compare Mohammedanism), as among the uneducated religionists of all time.

6. The embryo. Ps. 139:16: "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."

7. Mind Infinite. "Our merciful Father has no pleasure in the sufferings of His children; He chastens them in love; He never inflicts a stroke He could safely spare; He inflicts it to purify as well as to punish, to caution as well as to cure, to improve as well as to chastise." Hannah More.

8. Buddhist numeration:

> Sarvanikchepa, by the which you deal
> With all the sands of Gunga, till we come
> To Antah-Kalpas, where the unit is
> The sands of ten crore Gungas. If one seeks
> More comprehensive scale, th' arithmic mounts
> By the Asankya, which is the tale
> Of all the drops that in ten thousand years
> Would fall on all the world by daily rain."
>
> —*Sir Edwin Arnold,* Part I, Page 9, LIGHT OF ASIA.

9. As, for instance, the minute accretions of arteriosclerosis, or of lime in finger-joints, around the earth.

10. I found surcease in writing (1921) this little poem:

PASTEL

> Amid the sunset clouds the young moon lay,
> Now shining clear, now almost hidden away.
> The saffron shades turned slowly into gray,
> The sweet, harmonious end of summer's day.
>
> How is it that old Nature meets our need,
> But has not let us yet her secret read?
> She soothes us till our close-held thoughts are freed,
> And roam like children playing on the mead.

11. Apologists': The suggestion and inference that archeological confirmation of history in the Bible confirms

belief in Biblical inerrancy can appeal only to bemusement.

12. Faith: My grandmother Bradbury, in her last illness, angina pectoris, quoted, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

13. Hebrew Law: "I came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfill." Matt. V:17.

14. Fluctuations of faith: "Within a single generation the relation of Christ's flesh and blood to the bread and wine was changed five times by royal proclamation or act of parliament."—THE LAW OF CIVILIZATION AND DECAY, Brooks Adams, p. 26.

15. NATURE'S WAY

". . . . . till everywhere
Each slew a slayer, and in turn was slain,
Life living upon death. So the fair show
Veiled one vast, savage, grim conspiracy
Of mutual murder, from the worm to man,
Who himself kills his fellow; seeing which—
The hungry plowman and his laboring kine,
Their dewlaps blistered with the bitter yoke,
The rage to live which makes all living strife—
The Prince Siddartha sighed. "Is this," he said,
"That happy earth they brought me forth to see."

LIGHT OF ASIA

Nature's Way is, also, the way of the Primitive, whose logic is remorseless; the Way of the Armed Forces ditto; even the Way of Chivalry and Martyrdom, although for a different reason. Jesus said: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his

life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." John XII: 24-5.

16. "Priest speaks": When my grandfathers were young, a century ago, some preachers were denouncing anesthetics in childbirth as opposed to the Bible, citing Gen. III:16, "in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children." A Catholic in the pulpit I heard say, a few years ago, "Jesus Christ came to this earth to found the Catholic Church."

PERSONAL NOTE

Now, at seventy-five, I look back upon a half-century of increasing rationality, after a youth of extreme Christian indoctrination. A score of years ago I expressed my philosophy in the following lines:

Life, like a river, shall flow and flow forever;
Its sources, like a stream's, inscrutable.
Rising from earth, from heaven it came and never
Shall man resolve what is so dubitable.
Enough, if we improve upon the past,
And leave a memory loved while it shall last.

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